



Commissioner Elena Cabatu
Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

Elena Cabatu was born and raised in Hilo on the Big Island. As a half Filipina and Japanese, she is just generations removed from Hawaii's sugar plantations. She attended Hawaii public schools until transferring to Hawaii Preparatory Academy in her sophomore year, which paved the path to attending Georgetown University. She graduated in 2000, majoring in English with a concentration on Literature and Performance and Linguistics and also minoring in Inter-Arts with a concentration on Acting. Much of her studies focused on the local Hawaii identity in relation to Pidgin English. She created collections of short stories, poetry and a one-woman play in the local language. Her poems have been published in "YellOh! Girls," a collection of short stories and poems by young Asian American women; "Hybolics," Lee Tonouchi's literary journal; and other publications. While at Georgetown, in addition to her studies, Elena played in NCAA Division I women's soccer in the Big East Conference.

After Georgetown, Elena joined the Communications Consortium Media Center in Washington, DC to work on international women's rights and health. While in DC, CCMC supported her in forming the Communicators Collective, a collection of entry to mid level communications/public relations professionals working at a variety of non-governmental organizations throughout DC. Elena added a social arm to the communications group called Women to Watch DC, which fostered the building and strengthening of relationships among the next generation of women leaders in DC.

At the end of 2005, Elena returned home to Hilo where she continues work for CCMC as an independent consultant today. In August 2006, she joined the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation as the East Hawaii Regional Community Relations and Program Manager.